

MOTION BY SUPERVISOR MARK RIDLEY-THOMAS

December 17, 2013

Establishing a Process to Provide Vital Records and Identification for Ex-Offenders

Ensuring public safety requires more than suppression of crime and supervision of those convicted of criminal offenses residing in the community. Sound public safety policy requires an explicit focus on reentry and re-integration of formerly incarcerated and previously convicted individuals in order to reduce recidivism. The lack of identification and vital records is a barrier to successful reentry among ex-offenders returning to the community who seek employment and access to supportive services. Reducing the cyclical effects of incarceration and the significant fiscal mandates that attach, necessitates that the County of Los Angeles (County) identify opportunities and pathways to improve the trajectory of ex-offenders.

Over the two years of public safety realignment, almost 19,000 individuals have returned to Los Angeles County to be supervised by the Probation Department. On average, 19,000 adults are currently awaiting trial or serving sentences in the county jail system, a system that admits over 160,000 individuals annually. Another 17,000 youth

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RIDLEY-THOMAS _____

YAROSLAVSKY _____

ANTONOVICH _____

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are under the supervision of the Probation Department, including nearly 1,800 who are confined in juvenile detention facilities. The majority of these individuals will ultimately be released back into the community without basic identification documents. Absent proper identification, ex-offenders cannot prove their identity to law enforcement officials, face increased barriers to employment and housing, and increases the prospect of an ex-offender recidivating. Consequently, establishing a process for providing youth and adult ex-offenders with vital records and identification is an essential step forward to enable them to successfully transition back into the community.

I THEREFORE MOVE THAT, THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS:

1. Direct the Chief Executive Officer, in collaboration with the Countywide Criminal Justice Coordination Committee, Sheriff's Department, Probation Department, and Registrar-Recorder/County Clerk to establish a process for providing vital records, including birth certificates, and state issued identification cards to (1) adults in Sheriff's custody and under the supervision of the Probation Department, and (2) youth under the supervision of the Probation Department. The process should include a data collection element to measure outcomes.
2. Direct the Chief Probation Officer, Sheriff, Registrar-Recorder, and Chief Executive Officer to identify funding to establish a process for providing vital

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records and state-issued identification to ex-offenders. In identifying funding, the Chief Executive Officer should also report back on how these funds would be designated and accessed to ensure the provision of vital records and identification.

3. Direct the affected departments to provide a written report back to the Board in 30 days.